

FRANCIS

BACON



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FRANCIS BACON

THE SOLOMON R. GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, NEW YORK

IN COLLABORATION WITH

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

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The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum is honored to present the first American Museum retrospective exhibition by the distinguished British painter Francis Bacon. The Museum thereby implements its stated policy to exhibit modern art of exceptional quality and significance regardless of national origins or stylistic categories.

That we should be joined in this endeavor by one of the great museums in this country, The Art Institute of Chicago, is a source of particular gratification and sets a fruitful precedent for similar collaborative ventures in the future.

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Francis Bacon, through his imagery, refers to the Gospel and to Van Gogh; to Popes and to businessmen; to male and female nudes; to dogs and apes. The underlying, ever-recurring theme, is the figure (saintly, human or animal, with a degree of interchangeability) shown in an environment that is natural or man-made. Bacon thus is intelligible and his scene, blurred and veiled though it may be, remains recognizable. His painting—figurative in the ordinary sense of this term—is nevertheless unlikely to satisfy those who yearn for a return to old-time art, to a back-swing of the pendulum from abstraction to a naturalistic mode.

Why should this be so? Chiefly, we believe, because Francis Bacon is so demanding and so incapable of fulfilling the hope for a comfortable art. With him, there is no release from tension, no lessening of the viewer's commitment. He is quite unable to afford such simple pleasures as constitute to many beholders the obvious function of art. Instead Bacon strains our viewing capacity to the utmost. Recognizability notwithstanding, he is more difficult to "understand" than many abstract painters.

To approach the essence of Bacon's work, we must come to terms, intellectually or intuitively, with any number of complex thoughts of which a few may be summarized as follows:

The relation of Bacon's images to his formal pursuits. This involves the subtle interplay between the artist's seemingly haphazard choice of subject matter and of the stylistic means through which he brings it to life.

A consideration of Bacon's probing disposition which instinctively reaches for images and for analogous pictorial means that touch upon essentials. He thereby forces us into questioning confrontations with basic attitudes, prejudices, and taboos and by so doing necessarily hurts us before affording such relief as comes from widened understanding.

An understanding of the meaning of ugliness in art and the realization that horror can be sublimated through formal perfection into the most satisfying of harmonies.

A consideration of pictorial space and its relation to our prevailing world view. For Bacon gives us a graphic extension of known reality, thereby leading us to rethink our placement as individuals in the world of our understanding.

These and other issues are forced upon us by Bacon's relentless art. Since, once confronted, we cannot turn away, his propositions are most uncomfortable. The great reward held out to us is that through the comprehension of Francis Bacon's blurred vision, we shall see ourselves with greater clarity.

The Francis Bacon exhibition and the accompanying catalogue were prepared by Mr. Lawrence Alloway, Curator of this Museum, for presentation at The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York and The Art Institute of Chicago.

Thomas M. Messer, Director, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

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Lawrence Alloway, Curator, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

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INTRODUCTION

A great deal of Bacon criticism has been devoted to a single aspect of his imagery. Because there are Popes that scream or solitary figures in hotel bedrooms, they have been identified as allegorical personifications of Melancholy or Dejection. The paintings have been treated as cultural symptoms, mirrors held up to an age in pieces, generalized moral lessons, rather than as individual expressions. The result is that Bacon, as an artist, has been dissolved, or inflated, into a cultural barometer. The writers who are responsible for this all see the present time in negative terms, so that Bacon becomes the laureate of Buchenwald, the Goya of the Early Space Age. Criticism of this kind makes for rather lively reading—far more exciting and emotional than art critics can usually manage to be. Metaphors of nightmare, breakdown, and crisis abound. Literary parallels are constantly invoked, such as Kafka, Beckett, Joyce (the sermon in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*), and George Orwell (1984). Such writing derives from the original historical dramas of cultural historians who use works of art to embody moments of crisis, paths of decline, or crossroads of transition in culture. In their hands, the method is, at least, based on a thorough historical knowledge: time provides a perspective for their judgments. To write about a contemporary artist in this way, however, assumes a comprehensive grasp of our culture, which, while we live in it, as participants, we may not have. The meaning of our culture is incomplete until the future confers it. Thus, the reading of Bacon as the drama of a culture in crisis tends to be inconclusive as well as indulgent. There is, also, the awkward fact that if works of art are treated as signals of the state of culture, all art is significant in this way, and not simply the work of violent artists. Chardin, Vuillard, and Morandi must also be significant, and not only Goya, Picasso, and Bacon.

Though one objects to reading Bacon's art in terms of a melodrama of the human condition, this does not mean he should be considered a detached and esthetic artist. On the contrary, he is an inveterate enemy of the idea of the dehumanization of art. to use Ortega's phrase for a widely held approach to art in the 19th and 20th centuries. A concise statement of this position is Cocteau's witticism in the dedication of *Orphée*: "A painter may throw himself from the fifth storey, and the art-lover would only say: 'That makes a pretty splash'."¹ The assumption is that human meaning is of negligible value compared to strictly held formal values. Bacon, however, has always put conspicuous human meanings in the foreground. In fact, it has been his strategy to conceal his formal concerns behind the spectacle of human action. When he blurs a face, it could be a wound, as well as a painterly decision: when he compresses a form, it is as much like an injury as an exercise in foreshortening. He makes formal meanings resemble painful human experiences. The marks of painting, including conspicuous signs of improvisation, become images of the movements of his figures or of their suffering.

It is, perhaps, time to try to write about Bacon as a painter, rather than as an allegorist of *Angst*, and about his works as paintings, rather than as documents of a 20th century problem, predicament, crisis, or what have you. Central to Bacon's art is a dual time-sense. He has, it is true, an acute sense of topical images, rendered with immediacy, but he is also persistently aware of the past and its models. He has, for instance, paraphrased repeatedly Velasquez's *Portrait of Pope Innocent X* (Doria Gallery). In the Van Gogh series he not only alluded to Van Gogh's *The Road to Tarascon*, but also, in the first *Study for Portrait of Van Gogh*, to Manet's *Execution of the Emperor Maximilian* (Boston Museum of Fine Arts).² Hence, a buried, and thoroughly unexpected, connection is established between an image of Van Gogh, surely linked with our idea of a victim, and the figure of the sergeant of the firing squad on the right-hand side of Manet's sketch. In the fifth *Study for Portrait of Van Gogh*, the painter appears in a strong Art Nouveau style, as if painted by Munch. In the recent *Three Studies for a Crucifixion*, the corpse in the central panel is reminiscent of the bullet-pierced flesh of the corpses in Goya's *Execution of May 3, 1808*. There is, of course, a link between Goya's and Manet's firing-squad paintings. Persistent, though buried, connections of this kind are contained in Bacon's art, linking it with the tradition of painting, though on his own terms.



Van Gogh, The Artist on the Road to Tarascon. August, 1888. Oil on canvas, 21½ x 26". Destroyed.

Bacon's concern with tradition should not be translated immediately into the received picture of an individual in agreement with his inheritance. Tradition for him is not a snowball which he slightly enlarges by rolling it a little further on an established track. The past to Bacon is not a gallery of coherent prototypes which he modifies but whose dominance he does not question (the approach to tradition recommended by early 20th century classicists and conservatives). Tradition to Bacon seems to be a shifting bundle of models and influences in a problematic relationship with recent experiences. The records of the past are available in underground and personal ways: consider the irony and paradox involved in the Manet quotation or in the stylistic reference to, as it were, an unpainted portrait by Munch.

Bacon's allusions to Velasquez's *Pope Innocent X* are well-known. There is, however, another work which could only be known to Bacon in the form of a reproduction, a



Manet, Sketch, Execution of Maximilian. 1867. Oil on canvas, 77 x 93". Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Goya, Execution of May 3, 1808 (detail). 1814. Oil on canvas, 105 x 120". Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.



remarkable painting by Titian in the John G. Johnson Collection, Philadelphia. It represents a sitter, Cardinal Filippo Archinto, in a pose that anticipates the Velasquez, but with a transparent curtain hanging over half the painting. The face fades, the right eye is divided, and the hands are smeared through the material. This bizarre work seems to be one of the formative factors in Bacon's *Study After Velasquez*, 1953, in which the face is partially obscured by vertical folds of material. It is the history of art, as it contains curiosities and puzzles, as well as masterpieces, as a record of human action, rather than as a pure fountain-head, which absorbs Bacon.

Of greater consequence, probably, than the presence of individual quotations from other artists, is the general reminiscence, in his work, of the Grand Manner. By Grand Manner, I mean the central tradition of European figure painting as it developed in the Renaissance and as it dominated all subsequent figure painting until the 20th century. Bacon's paintings preserve numerous allusions to the Grand Manner. The size of the canvas, the placing of the figures within it, the gestures and poses of the figures depicted—all reveal an underlying structure of the Grand Manner format that has been thoroughly assimilated into a direct and natural way of working. These echoes of the past are not academic simulacra of past models; on the other hand, their persistence in Bacon's art differentiates him from

(left) Velasquez, *Portrait of Pope Innocent X*. 1650. Oil on canvas, $55\frac{1}{2} \times 47\frac{1}{2}$ ". Galleria Doria Pamphili, Rome.

(center) Titian, *Portrait of Cardinal Filippo Archinto*. Oil on canvas, 46×36 ". John G. Johnson Collection, Philadelphia.

(right) Bacon, *Study after Velasquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X*. 1953. Oil on canvas, $60\frac{1}{8} \times 46\frac{1}{2}$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. William A. M. Burden, New York.



abstract painters. In fact, even as the past is evoked by the structure of the paintings, it is questioned and undermined. A grand compositional display becomes a keyhole to intimacy. Within the format of the Grand Manner, human, spatial, and painterly cues are charged with fresh meanings. Within an heroic contour, for instance, a figure will be painted in an elliptical or perfunctory manner. Instead of the spatial coherence of the Grand Manner, figures fade against a black void, or are pressed forward by a flat color plane.

To Bacon, the Grand Manner is indispensable, as a frame against which to work, eroding and subverting it, but not removing it. He needs both the symbol of order, of which the Grand Manner provides an ample and long-lived example, and its opposite, intimate and unanticipated images. The two elements interlock, one giving body, one giving mystery, to the other. In this respect, Bacon can be compared to both Giacometti and de Kooning, but not to Dubuffet (whose human figures are flat and primitivistic). Giacometti's sitters are withered paraphrases of Baroque portraiture, with the tall grey studio behind them as the surrogate of column and curtain. De Kooning's *Women* preserved, through all the sweat and fruitiness of their paint, a basic seated pose, seen early in his 1938 *Queen of Hearts*, which derives from Renaissance originals. The interplay of flesh and dilapidation in de Kooning rests on a Grand Manner infra-structure. The point is that all three painters, unlike Dubuffet, are *post-Raphaelite* painters, with no desire to simplify, to strip off history and sophistication; they only want to make their own uses of it.

This act of preserving, knowingly, a form, while transforming it partially, produces an art which is highly ambiguous, to use a word that is continually employed in 20th century criticism. Surrealist images, which conflate different objects or classes of objects, are so-called, although, in fact, the effect is of a puzzle rather than of ambiguity. In the works of Bacon, Giacometti, and de Kooning (the *Women*, not the abstract paintings), it is the structure of the work itself which is ambiguous. It is partly the continuation of a past tradition in a confident and still viable form. It is, also, the reduction of the forms of this tradition to act as a container for an unexpected content, sometimes a disreputable one. The Grand Manner becomes, at times, Grand Guignol. Instead of being the paradigm of order, the format of the Grand Manner becomes merely a corral for wild beasts, freshly trapped. It is essential for Bacon to preserve a given and canonical form, against which he can work. His paint creates the form but, simultaneously, withholds its complete definition. The traditional composition and its heroic occupants are both raised and perpetuated. but, at the same time, they are parodied and damaged.

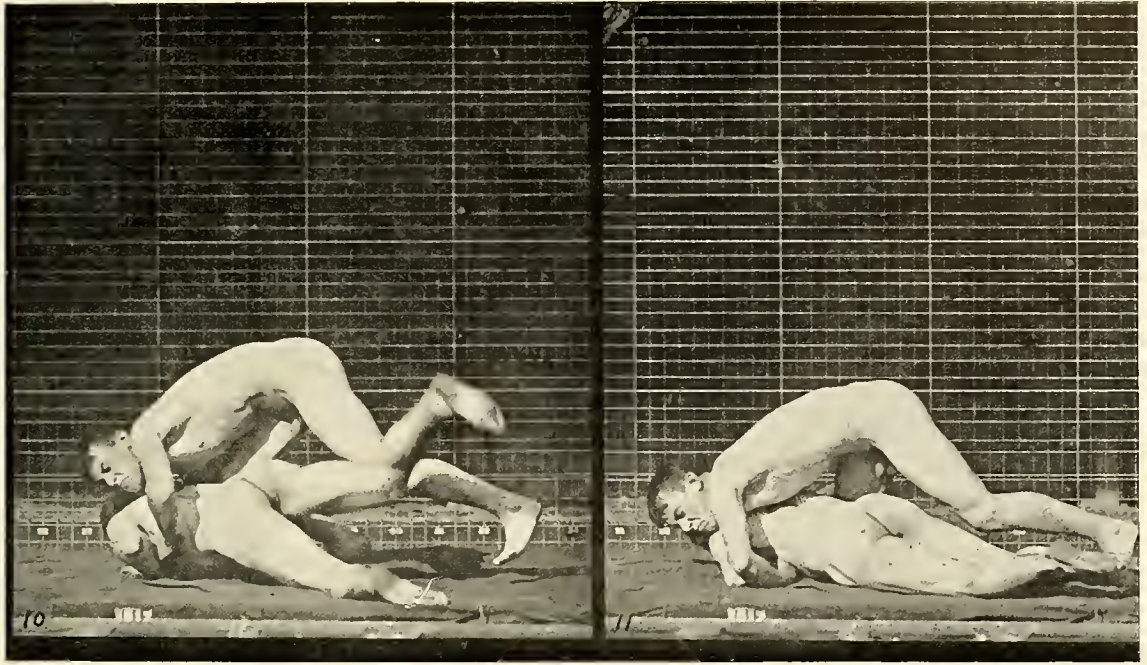
The use of orderly form, without confidence in its absoluteness, and the insertion of disturbing subjects into a pre-existing form, has analogies with Baudelaire. The regular stanzas and the classic structure of the line in his poetry divulged subjects and emotions foreign to the decorum usually associated with his structure. Similarly in Bacon, the apparatus of the Grand Manner supports a drastically changed iconography. In two early paintings by Bacon, for example, an umbrella is used; in both, the umbrella shields a figure whose head appears to have been sheared through, cutting the top of the skull off. The

incongruity of the umbrella, in scenes of such violence, should not block our memory of the fact that umbrellas were used, with fair frequency, in Baroque art, to protect the sitters of, for instance, Van Dyck and Le Brun. A covert and bizarre art historical reminiscence is set up, adding resonance to the shocking image.

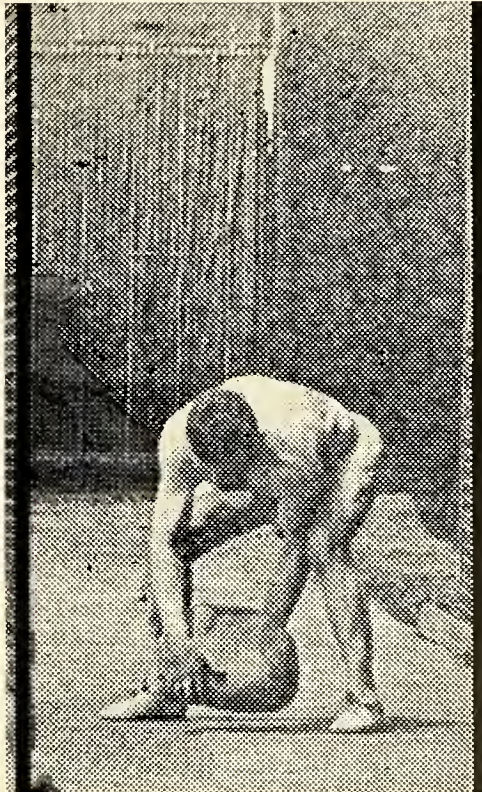
Bacon's nudes, often derived from motion studies of late 19th century males by Eadweard Muybridge, evoke the Grand Manner unmistakably. As the muscles rise, memories of Michelangelo and his followers are strong. Bacon's figures, of men exercising singly or in pairs, link with the modern tendency to take nudity in art literally. Looking at the 16th century's heroic nudes it is hard for us to separate the painted or carved figures from human anatomy. A potential of human reality within the ideal figures has been released, often at the expense of the symbolism originally identified with Mars or Vulcan or athletes (their physical well-being a code for virtue). Separated from iconography, Michelangelo's nudes are swung into a new context; his athletes take on the attributes of muscle-eroticism rather than Neo-Platonism. The tradition of Michelangelo's homosexuality is related, now, to the Sistine vault, which appears to us as though covered by gymnasts. Similarly, the males that Bacon paints imply a homosexual content. It is not a matter of recovering, after bourgeois suppression, the socially-sanctioned and culturally normal homosexuality of, say, a Greek poet. On the contrary, Bacon asserts the presence of latent homosexual meanings within the tableaux of the Grand Manner. As in Baudelaire the traditional theme changes within the known form, like fruit rotting in a bowl without outward change, or like a house adapted internally for different generations of inhabitants, but preserving an ancient façade.

One of the ways in which Bacon relates to the Grand Manner involves a special definition of man and space. In the Renaissance, the human body was defined as a solid, subject to physical laws, set in measurable space. The movements of the body in this space were highly adaptive and competent; able to fight, build, and love, good at selective tasks. Bacon is sensitive to this definition of space as the area that an individual can move in or reach. He abandons the objective ground plane of the Renaissance and organizes space around his human figures, outwards from the active agent. Bacon has used thrones, couches, cages, beds, canopies, booths, and the Cross to define the area of human movement. The recurring image is of a human being pinned to an intimate area of use. Our experience of what is close is different from our experience of what is distant, and Bacon (despite occasional landscapes) is basically a painter of near forms. His human image is persistently conceived in relation to intimate, touchable, reached areas of the world. The cradle within which the child is set, the bed on which we spend so much of our lives; the table at which I am writing, or a telephone booth; a chair, or a Cross to which One has been nailed. The space beyond these islands of man's use is amorphous or inaccessible.

The spectator's relation to Bacon's pictorial space is highly participative. The figures, on or in their residual Renaissance structures, seem to be trespassed upon, rather than cooperatively posing for the artist. Or the artist himself (who becomes subjectively identified with the spectator) seems engaged in the acts of his figures. Curtains drop, heads loom in



Photographs from Eadweard Muybridge's "The Human Figure in Motion," London, Chapman and Hall, 1901.



close-up, bodies are cut off by the frame, so that we feel a constant sense of privacy invaded and of personal involvement. Erwin Panofsky has pointed out that typical Renaissance treatises on perspective "devote much time and space to the construction of regular and semi-regular solids, of architectural features and of scenery," whereas it was difficult "to cope with the human body because of its utter irregularity."³ This is the point at which Bacon's interest in the human body starts. To quote Panofsky again: the "variety of human movements" was rarely depicted as "the result of a continuous transition from one state to another."⁴ In fact, Bacon has made this theme his own, with his studies of transitional human movements flickering through the wrecked Grand Manner.

The use of elaborate presentational devices by Bacon is not immune to our special self-consciousness in the 20th century. We have become sceptically aware of the process of communication itself, recognizing the rhetorical functions of dress and gesture, and of the technical means themselves. The events of present history may be staged, because the participants know that they occupy a goldfish bowl. Thus, Bacon often turns the painting, self-consciously, into a tableau, a demonstration, a display. The fact of his frankness about the mechanics involved does not stop them from working. On the contrary, his knowledge links with the visual sophistication of the 20th century audience. In fact, the theme of death, which is constant in his work, occurs within the prepared scene. Some of his images of mortality recall the verisimilitude of death and decay presented in natural history museums in Europe. For instance, in the Zoologiske Museum, Oslo, there is "a group of African scavenger birds feasting upon the head of a dead zebra, with matter oozing out of eyes, nose, and mouth, and maggots competing with the birds."⁵ This compound of an artificial presentation with a shocking image of corruption is Baconian.

It is important to determine the function of photographs in Bacon's art. He used a still of the injured nurse in *The Battleship Potemkin* in 1949 and subsequently around 1950 he began using motifs from the motion studies of Muybridge. Also in the early 50s he used Marius Maxwell's *Stalking Big Game With a Camera in Equatorial Africa*, though, as a rule, indirectly. The Popes of 1951 quote not only from Velasquez's *Innocent X* but, also, from a photograph of Pope Pius XII carried on a *sedia gestatoria* through a room in the Vatican. This group of paintings is, incidentally, the first series showing successive, though mysterious, episodes. Here Bacon is producing some of his most fully realized works, as if he were aiming at a masterpiece, but at the same time, repeating the image with small changes, like a series of photographs or a comic strip.

What is the historical relation of photography to art? Obviously the belief that it would kill, or that it had killed, figurative painting satisfied only a few early 20th century



Clippings in Bacon's studio, circa 1951.

polemicists. What photography did was to enlarge the scope of figurative painting by carrying the human image out of classical idealism. Delacroix recognized this clearly: "After having examined . . . photographs of nude models, some of them poorly built, overdeveloped in places and producing a rather disagreeable effect, I displayed some engravings by Marcantonio. We had a feeling of repulsion, almost of disgust, at their incorrectness, their mannerism, and their lack of naturalness; and we felt these things despite the virtue of style."⁶ Bacon's use of photographs is fully in line with this reading of photographs as non-hierarchical and un-planned fragments of real life. Thus, in his work, blurred forms and mysterious gestures, derived to some extent from photographs, occur within the context of the Grand Manner. A processional image becomes a scene of assault, like an assassination; wrestlers become lovers: figures in a room look like celebrities whose names and faces we can no longer keep together. Bacon simulates the grainy quality of photographs, especially when

processed for reproduction, thus, depositing, as it were, bits of the world in his imposing pictures. Both texture and gesture derive, in Bacon's work, from photographic sources. The evasive nature of his imagery, which is shocking but obscure, like accident or atrocity photographs, is arrived at by using photography's huge repertory of visual images for all objects and events,⁷ which permits connections between widely scattered phenomena (a human head and an ape's, for instance).

Human actions, when arrested in time, frozen at a brief moment, have a potential for mystery, inasmuch as the purpose and context of the action may be missing. Uncaptioned news photographs, for instance, often appear as momentous and extraordinary, though deeply human and anonymous. In his earlier work Bacon used this property of photographs to subvert the clarity of pose of figures in traditional painting. In place of the convention of explicit gestures in art, he developed a style of unpremeditated gesture, of the inadvertently and obscurely revealing, based on the expressions and movements that we all share and manifest unknowingly.

So important is the theme of motion that Bacon's development can be, perhaps, discussed in terms of a change in his approach to the problem. From 1949 to 1956 the movement of figures is indicated mainly by blurring the edges and opening the planes of forms. Forms are evoked by partial glimpses, diffused by atmospheric chiaroscuro, though the whole form is never questioned. There is plenty of space for the implied movement to take place. The effect is of spatial fullness and of the free occupancy of space by mobile and fugitive figures. In 1956, though Bacon's interest in motion did not change, his way of handling it did. There is a new sharpness of contour and solidity (or, at least, continuity) of planes. Previously the whole figure was seen in motion, with each form retaining, however blurred or transparent, its integrity. The limbs might be hazy, but they were intact and in place. Later, however, motion is expressed by the compression of bounded and continuous forms. Thus, a turning head is indicated not by being smeary and blurred, but by being twisted; bodies, instead of fraying as they moved in time, are corkscrewed or dilated by successive movements, each phase of which is partially visible. It is possible that some reference to Futurism may be contained in the later figures.⁸ In the sliding and squeezing of anatomies there is a reminiscence of Umberto Boccioni's bronze sculpture *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space* (1913). What Bacon gives us, perhaps, is Boccioni's "ideal reconstruction of continuity" without the reference to machinery which geometrizes Boccioni's work. Instead of metallic surfaces, the figures are pulpy and vulnerable, as in the *Three Studies for a Crucifixion*, 1962.

A change in Bacon's color-range and paint-handling is related to this development. His earlier paintings are monochromatic, based on black and a restricted number of colors, clearly revealing a sympathy with Manet. The link with Manet is not casual, but a consistent parallel with an artist who preserved the Grand Manner format while painting improvisationally (and, to his critics, casually) within it. Bacon's paintings from 1945 to 1949 reveal,

on the whole, a progressive move from a dense, stickily-textured surface, which hesitates between painterly and sculptural form, to a consistent painterly style. With the 50s comes an increasing lightness in the paint, which tends to be dry and dabbed on, so that forms are grazed and flicked into being. In 1952 this manner of painting became sparser, a kind of parched morse-code over dry canvas. Variations of this way of painting are consistent until 1956 when richer color and more unified planes appear. By 1959 an unprecedented clarity of color puts, as it were, the formerly shadowy figures of Bacon into the light of day; and the light, combined with Bacon's use of literal effects of foreshortening, shows that the figures resemble cripples.

Although Bacon's work reveals change when viewed chronologically, he is not one of those artists whose work needs to be seen in sequential order for its full realization. He will hit on an image, with apparent suddenness, and then use it repeatedly, in variations which are not necessarily resolvable into a logical procedure. References back and forth between different versions of the basic images, create a denser layer of meaning than any of the works singly. For instance, the various paintings of the Crucifixion add to one another, but without revealing an ideological change between the 1950 and 1962 versions. His work is, perhaps, best viewed as a cluster of images, which he has invented and elaborated, returning to them over and over again.

*Déville, William Blake Life Mask. 1823. Plaster, 11½" high. National Portrait Gallery, London.
(see Catalogue Nos. 30, 31, 32, 34)*



Lessing has discussed the problem of the scream in art: "The simple opening of the mouth, apart from the violent and repulsive contortions it causes in the other parts of the face, is a blot on a painting and a cavity in a statue productive of the worst possible effect."⁹ "Imagine Laocoon's mouth open, and judge. Let him scream, and see. It was, before, a figure to inspire compassion in its beauty and suffering. Now it is ugly, abhorrent, and we gladly avert our eyes from a painful spectacle."¹⁰ It is clear that Bacon's human image continually violates the canon of Lessing. The scream is a recurring theme of Bacon's art: sometimes an early painting seems to be little more than a mouth, "a blot." It is imagery of this kind which called forth the criticism mentioned earlier. My point is not that Bacon is not a painter of grotesque and gruesome effects, but that these effects occur within the context of art, and not merely as reflexes to an historical moment.

If one characterizes Bacon as a painter of the grotesque it must be with certain reservations. He is not a painter of fantasy that transcends earthly reality or makes jokes out of it. He neither projects "the dreams of painters," in free-wheeling imagination, nor does he pursue compounds of human and other forms in a metamorphic game. He is not, for instance, much like Fuseli who, though he invented a personal iconography of terror and nocturnal effects, treated his figures and objects in a stylized and disembodied manner. Bacon always presupposes, and aims to convince us of, a substantial core to his paintings, human and solid. One function of his use of photographs is interference with the Grand Manner, but we read the interference as evidence of life and the human presence in the painting. In fact, Bacon is in line with that branch of the theory of the grotesque¹¹ which stresses the preservation of a basis in visual, observable fact. Although the monstrousness of the subject may be brought out, it is continually checked by correspondence to its model.

The technical means by which Bacon represents motion in time, within the spatial art of painting, are closely linked to his content. The way he manipulates the paint is inseparable from the impression of flesh and mortality with which he is preoccupied. Just as he preserves the Grand Manner as a normative framework, which he stretches but does not abandon, so he keeps the human contour legible through all deformations. The imagery of forms in motion becomes metaphoric of the way time, in longer periods, destroys bodies. Bacon's figures are represented in action, but, also, as subject to accelerations of time's process. Through motion studies, Bacon arrives at an imagery of death. In the small paintings of heads, his free handling identifies the paint with human flesh, which seems to be separating from the head and admitting sight of the skull. Death is, for Bacon, the point of reality which gives meaning to everything else; his grotesque imagery, therefore, leads directly to his sense of the factual. Erich Auerbach has pointed out that "in the 19th century the work 'realism' was associated chiefly with the crass representation of ugly, sordid and horrifying aspects of life."¹² Bacon, who has certainly inherited this association, can be, simultaneously, grotesque and realistic.

Lawrence Alloway

NOTES

1. Jean Cocteau. *Five Plays*, New York, 1961, p. 8.
2. Pointed out by Mark Roskill in his "Bacon as a Mannerist," which he kindly allowed me to read in manuscript.
3. Erwin Panofsky. *The Codex Huygens and Leonardo da Vinci's Art Theory*, London, Warburg Institute, 1940.
4. *Ibid.*
5. A. E. Paar. "Realism and Romanticism in Museum Exhibits," *Curator*, New York, vol. 6, no. 2, 1963, p. 174.
6. Eugene Delacroix. Entry, Saturday, May 21, 1853, *The Journal of Eugene Delacroix*, Translated by Walter Pach, New York, Crown, 1948, p. 314.
7. Examples of the kind of photograph that Bacon has used are found in Amédée Ozenfant's *Foundations of Modern Art* (new edition, New York, Dover, 1952), a possible source book. These are: a blurry photograph of a chimpanzee (p. 5), closer to Bacon's chimpanzee paintings of 1953 and 1955 than anything in Marius Maxwell: "Sir Austin Chamberlain as seen in a Distorting Mirror" (p. 59); and a man carrying a monkey (p. 174). T. B. Hess has reported de Kooning's observation that "a glance at a newspaper photograph or television report shows an incident in a city street that also might be happening in an open field or Hollywood bowl" (*Willem de Kooning*, New York, Braziller, 1959). Thus the photographic media can give a sense of immediacy while denying our sense of location.
8. Ronald Alley suggested, in his excellent notes to the catalogue of the Francis Bacon exhibition, Tate Gallery, 1962, that the Albright-Knox Art Gallery's *Man with Dog*, 1953, referred to Balla's *Leash in Motion*, seen in London in 1952.
9. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing. *Laocoon. An Essay Upon the Limits of Painting and Poetry*, New York, Noonday, 1961, p. 14.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
11. Wolfgang Kayser. *The Grottesque: Art and Literature*, Indiana, University of Indiana Press, 1963.
12. Erich Auerbach. "The Aesthetic Dignity of the 'Fleurs de Mal'," *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature*, New York, Meridian, 1959.

WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

The following paintings will be shown only in New York: Nos. 5, 7, 14, 23, 29.

1. FIGURE IN A LANDSCAPE. 1945. Oil on canvas, 57 x 50½".
Lent by The Trustees of The Tate Gallery, London.
2. STUDY FOR THE HUMAN FIGURE AT THE CROSS II. 1945-1946. Oil on canvas, 47¾ x 40¾".
Collection Corrado Levi, Turin.
3. THE MAGDALENE. 1945-1946. Oil on canvas, 57¼ x 50¾".
Lent by Bagshaw Art Gallery, Batley, England.
4. MAN WITH A CAR. 1945-1946. Oil on canvas, 57⅛ x 50⅜".
Lent by Galleria Galatea, Turin.
5. PAINTING. 1946. Oil and tempera on canvas, 77⅞ x 52".
Collection The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Purchase.
6. HEAD II. 1949. Oil on canvas, 32 x 27".
Collection Ulster Museum, Belfast, Northern Ireland.
7. HEAD IV. 1949. Oil on canvas, 32⅝ x 26¼".
Collection Geoffrey Gates, New York.
8. HEAD VI. 1949. Oil on canvas, 36¾ x 30¼".
Collection The Arts Council of Great Britain, London.
9. PAINTING. 1950. Oil on canvas, 78 x 52".
Collection City Art Gallery, Leeds, England.
10. FRAGMENT OF A CRUCIFIXION. 1950. Oil on canvas, 60 x 48".
Collection Mrs. Helen Grigg, Biot, France.

11. STUDY FOR NUDE. 1951. Oil on canvas, 78 x 54".
Private Collection, London.
12. POPE WITH FAN CANOPY. 1951. Oil on canvas, 78 x 54".
Lent by Marlborough Fine Art Ltd., London.
13. POPE. 1951. Oil on canvas, 77 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 54 $\frac{1}{2}$ ".
Collection The Aberdeen Gallery, Scotland.
14. POPE SHOUTING. 1951. Oil on canvas, 78 x 54".
Collection Städtische Kunsthalle, Mannheim.
15. STUDY FOR NUDE. 1952. Oil on canvas, 78 x 54".
Collection The Detroit Institute of Arts.
16. STUDY OF A DOG. 1952. Oil on canvas, 78 x 54".
Lent by The Trustees of The Tate Gallery, London.
17. STUDY FOR A PORTRAIT. 1952. Oil on canvas, 26 x 22".
Lent by Marlborough Fine Art Ltd., London.
18. STUDY OF A FIGURE IN A LANDSCAPE. 1952. Oil on canvas, 78 x 54".
The Phillips Collection, Washington, D. C.
19. LANDSCAPE. 1952. Oil on canvas, 54 x 42".
Lent by Marlborough Fine Art Ltd., London.
20. ELEPHANT FORDING A RIVER. 1952. Oil on canvas, 78 x 54".
Collection Mr. and Mrs. William A. M. Burden, New York.
21. STUDY FOR PORTRAIT. 1953. Oil on canvas, 60 x 46 $\frac{1}{2}$ ".
Lent by Marlborough Fine Art Ltd., London.
22. TWO FIGURES. 1953. Oil on canvas, 60 x 46".
Lent by Marlborough Fine Art Ltd., London.
23. STUDY OF A BABOON. 1953. Oil on canvas, 78 x 54".
Collection James Thrall Soby, New Canaan, Connecticut.
24. MAN WITH DOG. 1954. Oil on canvas, 60 x 46".
Collection Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo.
25. STUDY FROM THE HUMAN FIGURE. 1954. Oil on canvas, 59 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 45 $\frac{1}{2}$ ".
Collection Anthony Denney, London.
26. PORTRAIT. 1954. Oil on canvas, 22 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 19 $\frac{3}{4}$ ".
Collection Nicolò Donà Dalle Rose, Milan.
27. HEAD SURROUNDED BY SIDES OF BEEF (Study after Velasquez). 1954. Oil on canvas, 50 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 48".
Collection The Art Institute of Chicago, Harriott A. Fox Fund.
28. SPHINX. 1954. Oil on canvas, 59 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 45 $\frac{5}{8}$ ".
Lent by Marlborough Fine Art Ltd., London.

29. MAN IN BLUE I. 1955. Oil on canvas, $77\frac{3}{8} \times 55\frac{1}{8}$ ".
Urvater Collection, Belgium.
30. STUDY FOR PORTRAIT I (After the Life Mask of William Blake). 1955. Oil on canvas, 24×20 ".
Collection Dr. J. Dewey Bisgard, Omaha.
31. STUDY FOR PORTRAIT II (After the Life Mask of William Blake). 1955. Oil on canvas, 24×20 ".
Collection Lady Caroline Citkowitz, New York.
32. STUDY FOR PORTRAIT III (After the Life Mask of William Blake). 1955. Oil on canvas, 24×20 ".
Collection Miss Erica Brausen, London.
33. CHIMPANZEE. 1955. Oil on canvas, 60×46 ".
Collection Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart.
34. STUDY FOR PORTRAIT IV (After the Life Mask of William Blake). 1956. Oil on canvas, $24\frac{1}{2} \times 20$ ".
Collection James Thrall Soby, New Canaan, Connecticut.
35. FIGURES IN A LANDSCAPE. 1956. Oil on canvas, $60 \times 46\frac{1}{2}$ ".
Collection Birmingham City Art Gallery, Birmingham, England.
36. STUDY FOR PORTRAIT OF VAN GOGH I. 1956. Oil on canvas, $59\frac{1}{2} \times 45\frac{1}{2}$ ".
Collection Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Sainsbury, London.
37. STUDY FOR FIGURE V. 1956. Oil on canvas, $60 \times 46\frac{1}{2}$ ".
Lent by Kasmin Ltd., London.
38. ARAB AND CHILD. 1956. Oil on canvas, 78×56 ".
Collection Julian J. and Joachim Jean Aberbach, New York.
39. STUDY FOR PORTRAIT OF VAN GOGH III. 1957. Oil on canvas, $78\frac{1}{2} \times 56\frac{1}{8}$ ".
Collection The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, New York.
40. STUDY FOR PORTRAIT OF VAN GOGH V. 1957. Oil on canvas, 78×54 ".
Collection The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, New York.
41. STUDY FOR PORTRAIT #9. 1957. Oil on canvas, $60 \times 46\frac{1}{2}$ ".
The Abrams Family Collection, New York.
42. SELF-PORTRAIT. 1958. Oil on canvas, 60×47 ".
Collection The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, New York.
43. LYING FIGURE #3. 1959. Oil on canvas, 78×56 ".
Lent by Marlborough Fine Art Ltd., London.
44. SEATED MAN, ORANGE BACKGROUND. 1959. Oil on canvas, $61\frac{1}{4} \times 55\frac{7}{8}$ ".
Lent by Marlborough Fine Art Ltd., London.
45. HEAD OF MAN—STUDY OF DRAWING BY VAN GOGH. 1959. Oil on canvas, $26\frac{1}{8} \times 24\frac{1}{8}$ ".
Collection Mr. and Mrs. Harry C. Cooper, Los Angeles.
46. RECLINING FIGURE. 1959. Oil on canvas, $77\frac{5}{8} \times 55\frac{3}{4}$ ".
Lent by Marlborough Fine Art Ltd., London.

47. LYING FIGURE #2. 1959. Oil on canvas, 73 x 58".
Collection Franklin Konigsberg, New York.
48. TWO FIGURES IN A ROOM. 1959. Oil on canvas, 78 x 55 $\frac{3}{4}$ ".
Collection Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Sainsbury, London.
49. HEAD OF MAN NO. 1. 1959. Oil on canvas, 15 x 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ ".
Collection Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Sainsbury, London.
50. HEAD OF MAN NO. 4. 1959. Oil on canvas, 19 x 18".
Collection Mrs. Torquil Norman, London.
51. RECLINING WOMAN. 1960-1961. Oil on canvas, 78 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 55 $\frac{3}{4}$ ".
Lent by The Trustees of The Tate Gallery, London.
52. SEATED FIGURE. 1961. Oil on canvas, 65 x 56".
Lent by The Trustees of The Tate Gallery, London.
53. TWO FIGURES. 1961. Oil on canvas, 78 x 57".
Lent by Marlborough Fine Art Ltd., London.
54. WOMAN ON RED COUCH. 1961. Oil on canvas, 78 x 57".
Private Collection, Rome.
55. MAN DRESSED IN RED ON DAIS. 1962. Oil on canvas, 78 x 56".
Collection Julian J. and Joachim Jean Aberbach, New York.
56. STUDY FOR THREE HEADS. 1962. Oil on canvas, each 14 x 12".
Collection William S. Paley, New York.
57. THREE STUDIES FOR A CRUCIFIXION. 1962. Oil on canvas, each 78 x 57".
Lent by Marlborough Fine Art Ltd., London.
58. TURNING FIGURE. 1962. Oil on canvas, 78 x 57".
Collection Ted Weiner, Fort Worth.
59. MAN AND CHILD. 1963. Oil on canvas, 78 x 56".
Collection Julian J. and Joachim Jean Aberbach, New York.
60. STUDY FOR SELF-PORTRAIT. 1963. Oil on canvas, 65 x 57".
Lent by Marlborough Fine Art Ltd., London.
61. STUDY FOR PORTRAIT OF P. L. FROM PHOTOGRAPHS. 1963. Oil on canvas, 78 x 57".
Lent by Marlborough Fine Art Ltd., London.
62. STUDY FOR PORTRAIT ON FOLDING BED. 1963. Oil on canvas, 78 x 58".
Lent by Marlborough Fine Art Ltd., London.
63. LYING FIGURE WITH HYPODERMIC SYRINGE. 1963. Oil on canvas, 78 x 57".
Lent by Marlborough Fine Art Ltd., London.
64. LANDSCAPE NEAR MALABATA. 1963. Oil on canvas, 78 x 57".
Lent by Marlborough Fine Art Ltd., London.



1. *Figure in a Landscape*, 1945, (above)

2. *Study for the Human Figure at the Cross II*, 1945-1946. (below)



3. *The Magdalene*, 1945-1946.



4. *Man with a Car*. 1945-1946.



5. *Painting*, 1946.

6. *Head II*, 1949.



7. *Head IV*, 1949.



8. *Head VI*, 1949.



9. *Painting*. 1950. (above left)

10. *Fragment of a Crucifixion*. 1950.

11. *Study for Nude*. 1951. (above right)



12. *Pope with Fan Canopy*. 1951.



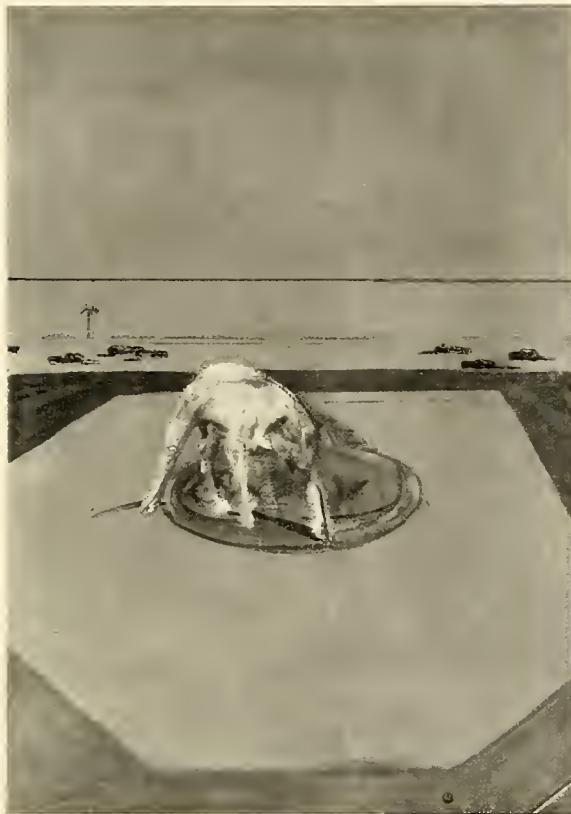
13. Pope, 1951.



14. *Pope Shouting*, 1951.



15. *Study for Nude*, 1952.



16. *Study of a Dog*, 1952, (above)

17. *Study for a Portrait*, 1952, (below)



18. *Study of a Figure in a Landscape*. 1952.



19. *Landscape*. 1952.



20. *Elephant Fording a River*. 1952.



21. *Study for Portrait, 1953.*



22. *Two Figures*. 1953.



23. *Study of a Baboon. 1953. (above)*

25. *Study from the Human Figure. 1954. (below)*

24. *Man with Dog. 1954. (above)*

26. *Portrait. 1954. (below)*



27. *Head Surrounded by Sides of Beef (Study after Velasquez), 1954.*



28. *Sphinx*. 1954.



29. *Man in Blue I*. 1955.

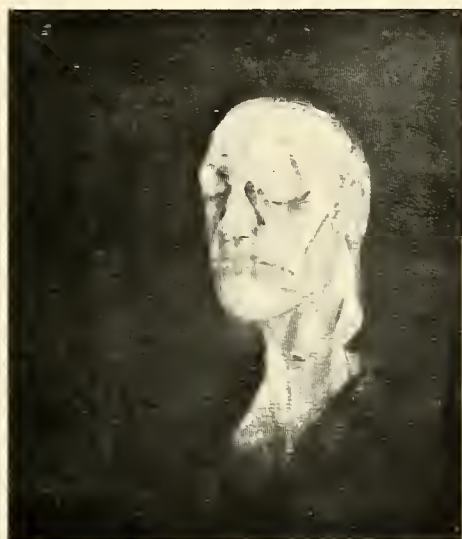


32. *Study for Portrait III (After the Life Mask of William Blake)*, 1955.

30. *Study for Portrait I (After the Life Mask of William Blake)*, 1955. (opposite page, top)

31. *Study for Portrait II (After the Life Mask of William Blake)*, 1955. (opposite page, center)

34. *Study for Portrait IV (After the Life Mask of William Blake)*, 1956. (opposite page, bottom)





33. *Chimpanzee*. 1955.



35. *Figures in a Landscape*, 1956.



36. *Study for Portrait of Van Gogh I, 1956. (above)*

39. *Study for Portrait of Van Gogh III, 1957. (below)*



40. *Study for Portrait of Van Gogh V*, 1957.



41. *Study for Portrait #9, 1957.*

37. *Study for Figure V, 1956. (above)*

42. *Self-portrait, 1958.*



38. *Arab and Child*. 1956. (above)

44. *Seated Man, Orange Background*. 1959. (below)

43. *Lying Figure #3*. 1959. (above)

45. *Head of Man—Study of Drawing by Van Gogh*. 1959. (below)



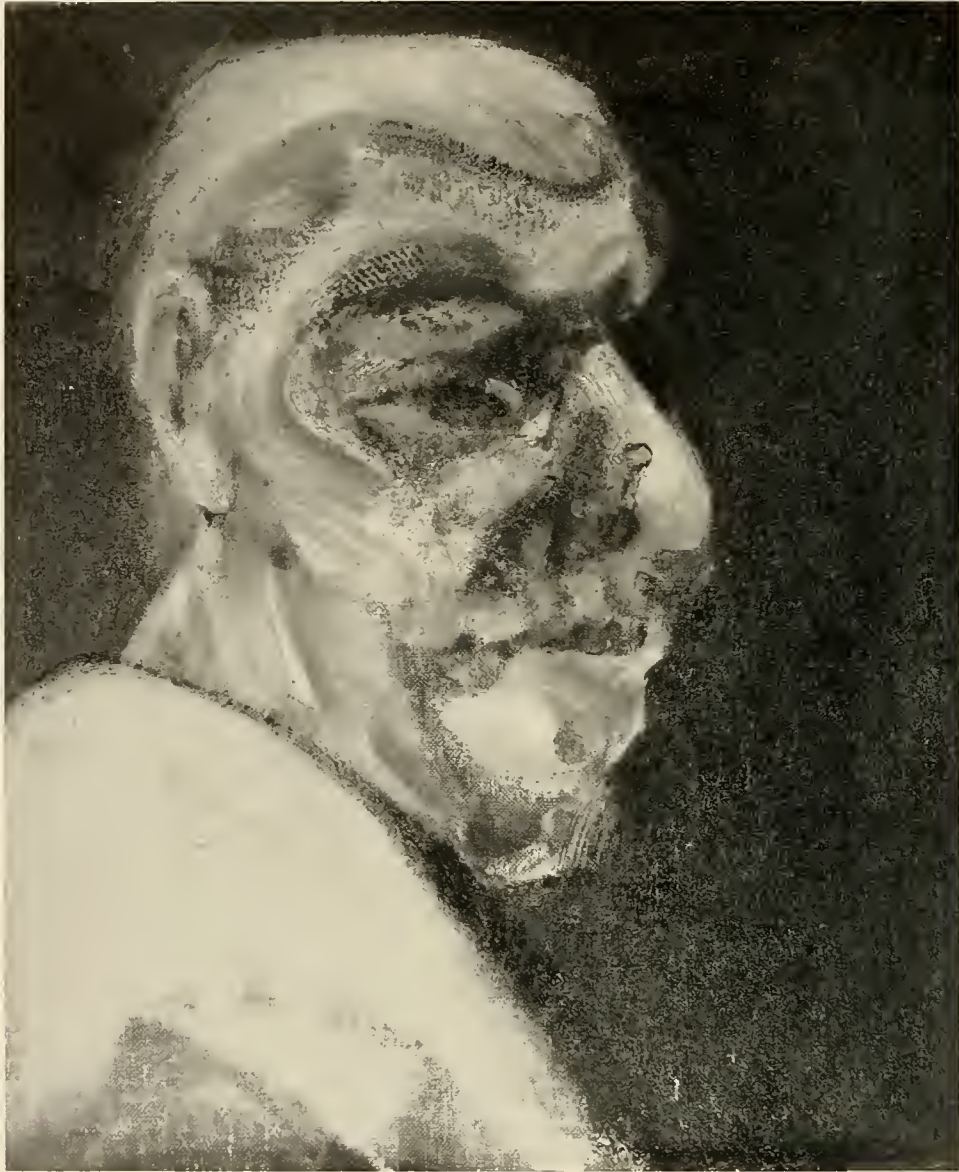
46. *Reclining Figure*, 1959.



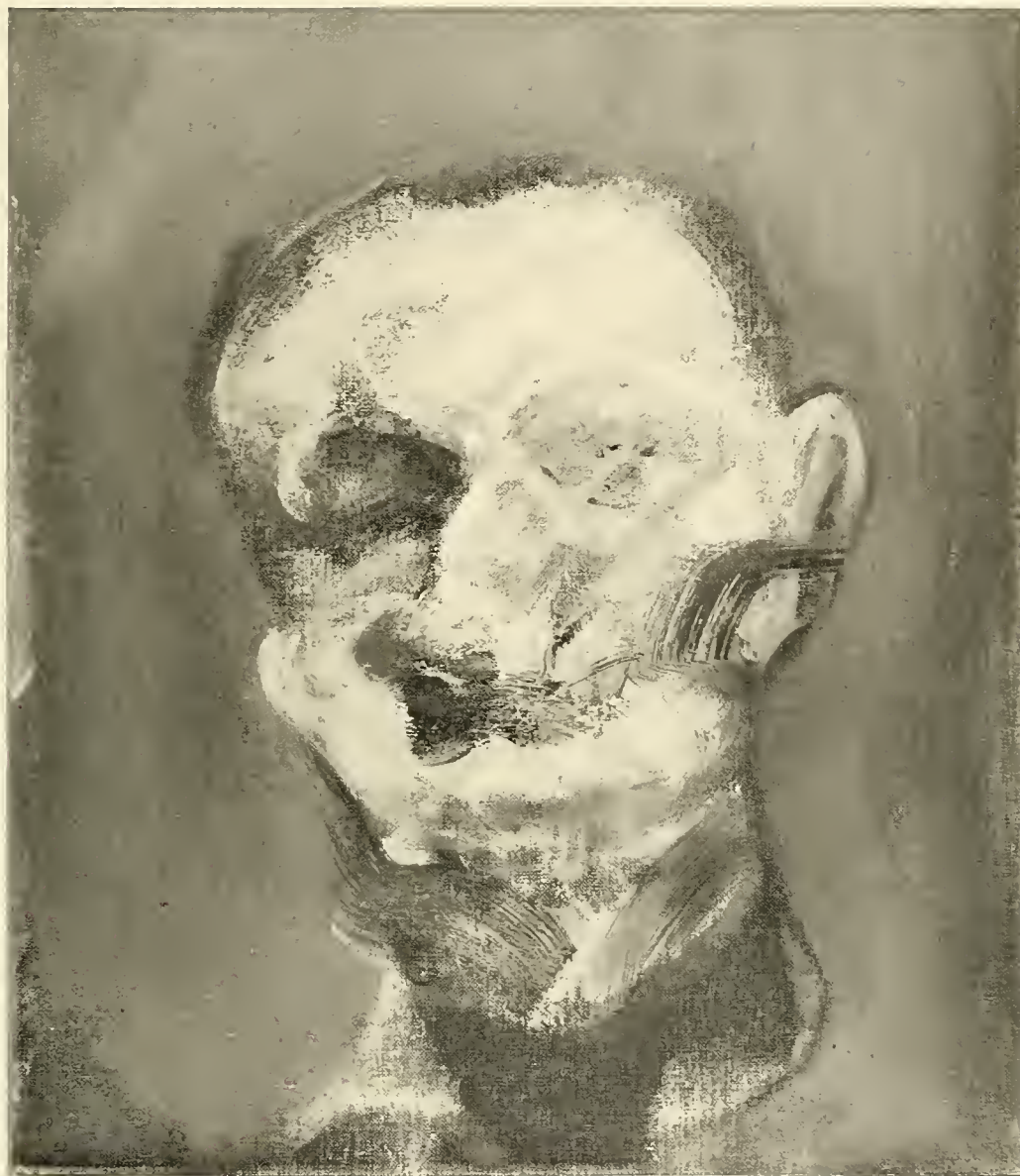
47. *Lying Figure #2*, 1959.



48. *Two Figures in a Room*. 1959.



49. *Head of Man No. 1. 1959.*



50. *Head of Man No. 4, 1959.*



52. *Seated Figure*, 1961.



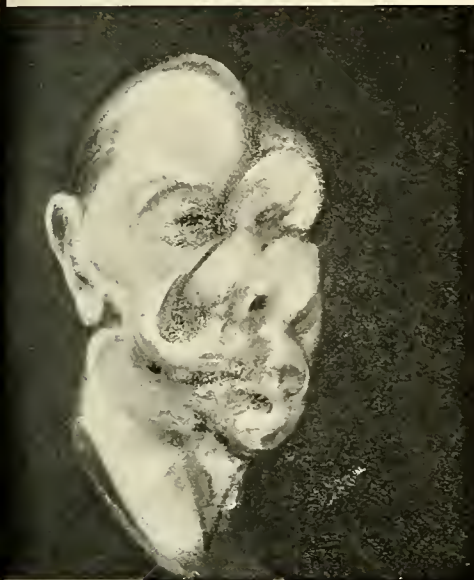
53. *Two Figures*. 1961.

51. *Reclining Woman*. 1960-1961. (above)

54. *Woman on Red Couch*. 1961.



55. *Man Dressed in Red on Dais*. 1962.





(left panel)

57. *Three Studies for a Crucifixion*, 1962.

(right panel)



57. *Three Studies for a Crucifixion*. 1962. (center panel)



58. *Turning Figure*, 1962.



59. *Man and Child*. 1963.



60. *Study for Self-portrait, 1963.*



61. *Study for Portrait of P. L. from Photographs, 1963.*



62. *Study for Portrait on Folding Bed, 1963.*



63. *Lying Figure with Hypodermic Syringe*. 1963.



64. *Landscape near Malabata, 1963.*

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